

**To:** Walker, Stuart[Walker.Stuart@epa.gov]  
**From:** Stuart Walker  
**Sent:** Tue 10/22/2013 8:03:58 PM  
**Subject:** Fw: Inside EPA article on Westlake RRB review, Mathy went to community meeting

----- Forwarded by Stuart Walker/DC/USEPA/US on 10/22/2013 04:03 PM -----

From: Stuart Walker/DC/USEPA/US  
To: Amy Legare/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Charles Openchowski/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Ron Wilhelm/DC/USEPA/US@EPA  
Date: 04/30/2012 11:23 AM  
Subject: Inside EPA article on Westlake RRB review, Mathy went to community meeting

---

<http://insideepa.com/Superfund-Report/Superfund-Report-04/30/2012/epa-elevates-review-of-key-radiation-cleanup-decision-to-remedy-board/menu-id-128.html>

Superfund Report - 04/30/2012

## EPA Elevates Review Of Key Radiation Cleanup Decision To Remedy Board

Posted: April 27, 2012

EPA is submitting its pending decision on how to handle radioactive waste at a controversial landfill near St. Louis to its National Remedy Review Board (NRRB), a panel at EPA headquarters that seeks to ensure consistent cleanup decisions nationwide.

The move highlights the significance of the decision, which environmentalists say could set a precedent for future disposal standards for such waste near urban areas if the agency were to retain its current plan to leave the waste in place.

EPA in 2008 announced a plan to leave radioactive radium-226 at the West Lake Landfill, a Superfund site in Bridgeton, MO, and cap and monitor the site. But the Obama Administration reconsidered the idea after strong protests from local activists, state officials and congressional lawmakers.

An agency-mandated study completed late last year came up with two alternatives -- excavating the waste and disposing of it off-site or moving the waste to an on-site disposal cell with a liner and cap, provided a suitable location could be found. But the supplemental feasibility study (SFS) suggested the Bush-era plan should remain in place, as alternatives would be more costly and technically difficult to implement.

According to a March 29 EPA fact sheet, EPA decided after completion of the SFS to submit the remedy to NRRB. "After completion of the SFS, EPA determined that the remedies must be evaluated by EPA's National Remedy Review Board. As of early 2012, the NRRB review is ongoing," the fact sheet says.

The fact sheet adds that EPA expects to announce a schedule for its decision later this year. "Next steps for publically announcing EPA's preferred alternative (as a result of EPA-Region 7's and EPA-Headquarters' consideration of the SFS information) will be defined by the spring/early summer of 2012," EPA says. *The fact sheet is available on InsideEPA.com. (Doc. ID: 2397311).*

Environmentalists have said the Bush-era cleanup plan of leaving the waste in place would set a dangerous precedent for leaving radioactive waste at urban Superfund sites at levels above the agency's traditional limits and set a precedent of allowing nuclear waste disposal at urban landfills not regulated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

An *Inside EPA* analysis of government documents found the Bush-era plan is 18 times less stringent than the ones EPA has used at other urban Superfund sites. An EPA spokesman disputes critics' characterization of the area as "urban," saying the landfill is in an "industrial/suburban" area, adjacent to an industrial park and an airport.

Activists have also warned that leaving the waste in place at the West Lake Landfill could lead to a repeat of actions in the 1990s at the Shattuck Superfund site in Denver, where EPA chose to cap and leave radioactive contamination in place but less than five years later removed the waste and took it to an NRC-licensed facility at an additional \$20 million cost.

EPA waste chief Mathy Stanislaus held a community round-table March 19 in St. Louis to hear concerns on the West Lake Landfill and other environmental cleanup issues in the region. An environmentalist who attended the meeting says Stanislaus listened but didn't say anything about which option EPA was considering for the landfill.

"It seems every four years [the cleanup decision] gets put off to someone else," says Keith English, president of the Florissant City Council, who met with Stanislaus. Florissant is located less than 10 miles from the landfill. "This has been going on for years," he said. "People in our town are drinking water eight miles downstream from a nuclear waste site."